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February 3, 2020

The Honorable Robert Lighthizer  
U.S. Trade Representative  
Office of the United States Trade Representative  
600 17<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Lighthizer:

We are writing to request your support, as well as others in the Administration, in urging the Government of India (GOI) to reduce its import duty on U.S. soda ash to 5.5% and to oppose efforts to increase the current Indian Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariff from 7.5% to 15%.

U.S. soda ash, which is a key input in the manufacture of glass and detergents among other items, is the most competitive and environmentally friendly soda ash in the world due to unique natural deposits of the raw material, trona, located in Wyoming and California. About 58% of U.S. soda ash production is exported. In 2019, India became the 8<sup>th</sup> largest export market for U.S. soda ash, compared to its status as the 20<sup>th</sup> in 2015. With U.S. exports to the world reaching \$1.4 billion in 2018, soda ash is the second largest export from the Port of Portland, and the largest industrial employer and export from Wyoming. Thousands of jobs are directly and indirectly dependent on soda ash in a number of other states, including Oregon, Connecticut, New Jersey, Georgia and Texas.

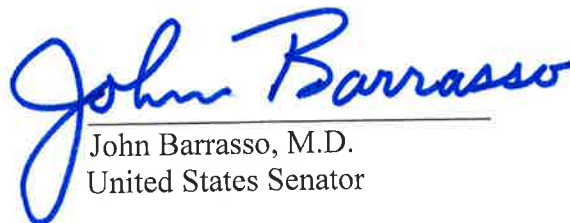
In October 2019, soda ash producers in India recommended doubling the tariff on soda ash imports from 7.5% to 15% as part of GOI "Make in India" policies. It is vital to fair trade that the GOI reject this blatant protectionism. The tariff rate should be reciprocal to the United States (1.2%) or, at a minimum, reduced to 5.5%, consistent with the Chemical Harmonization Agreement. A tariff reduction would principally benefit U.S. exporters rather than other exporters such as those from China who produce more costly and environmentally-damaging synthetic soda ash.

India's history of restricting U.S. soda ash should no longer be tolerated. We look forward to working closely with you to sustain the competitiveness of the U.S. soda ash industry.

Sincerely,



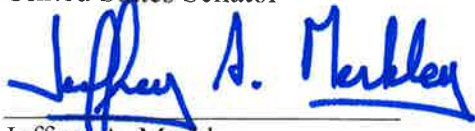
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